

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic West Ward School

and/or common West Building Mississinewa Community Schools

2. Location

street & number 210 West North A Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Gas City

N/A vicinity of

state Indiana

code 018

county Grant

code 053

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
 - private
 - both
- Public Acquisition**
- in process
 - being considered
 - N/A

Status

- occupied
 - unoccupied
 - work in progress
- Accessible**
- yes: restricted
 - yes: unrestricted
 - no

Present Use

- agriculture
 - commercial
 - educational
 - entertainment
 - government
 - industrial
 - military
- museum
 - park
 - private residence
 - religious
 - scientific
 - transportation
 - other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mississinewa Community Schools

street & number 424 West Main Street

city, town Gas City

N/A vicinity of

state Indiana 46933

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grant County Recorder

street & number 401 S. Adams Street

city, town Marion

state Indiana 46932

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, this two and one-half story brick and stone structure is rectangular in shape with a round tower at each corner surmounted by a conical roof. The main hip roof is intersected by front and rear gables. The brick school building has a high, rock-face stone foundation with a smooth stone water table.

Facing south, the symmetrical main facade (Photo #1) consists of a large, central gabled pavilion framed by recessed, three-bay wide areas, which are flanked by corner towers. The main entry dominates the first level of the center pavilion. A large round arch surmounts the main entry doors, which are replacements of the original doors. The arch features four courses of header brick with a stone architrave and decorative keystone. Rectangular window on both the basement level and the main level flank the door. These windows, as well as the other windows on the building, are replacements of the original double-hung sash. Stone coursing forms the sills of the main level windows. Above the arch, a wide, dentiled, stone panel with "West School" inscribed on it, extends across the central pavilion. Resting on the panel are four windows on the second level. The two outer windows have brick radiating voussoirs with stone above, and the two inner windows have rock-faced stone lintels. The attic level of the gable has two identical, round-arch windows with brick radiating voussoirs, with stone architraves and stone sills; a stone belt course extends across the gable at the impost level. A stone decoration is located in the gable peak.

Each recessed area framing the gabled pavilion has three windows on both the first and second levels. The first level windows have rock-faced stone lintels and the second level windows are surmounted by brick radiating voussoirs with stone coursing above; each window has a stone sill. Basement windows in this area, as well as on other exterior facades, are similar to those on the center gable. Each corner tower has three windows on both the first and second levels. First level windows have rock-faced stone lintels and second level windows are surmounted by a continuous rock-faced stone belt course; each has a stone sill. The rear corner towers are identical to the front towers.

Above the second level windows is corbeled brick coursing which extends around the building at the architrave level, except at the gable. At the roofline is positioned a modillioned cornice. A one-story, multi-purpose building of brick and concrete block was added in 1967 to the east side of the front exterior.

Between the corner towers on the west side facade (Photo #2), there are four windows on both the first and second levels. The first level windows have rock-faced stone lintels and sills, and the second level windows feature radiating voussoirs with rock-faced stone coursing above and rock-faced stone sills. A hip roof dormer is located above the cornice line and features a modillioned cornice and two double-hung sash windows.

The rear facade (Photo #3) is similar to but has less detailing than the main facade. A long stairway leading to the second level is positioned on this facade. In 1967, a one-story brick addition was also added to the rear exterior.

The roof is covered with slate and has a brick chimney on the east side.

Inside the main entrance is a stairway which leads to the first floor and the basement area. A stairway inside the back entrance also provides access to the first floor and basement. The second floor is accessed by stairs leading from the first level rear stairs.

The interior of the school contains nine classrooms--the main and second floor levels each have four, and one is located in the basement. The school office is on the second floor and restrooms, a furnace room, and a storage area are located in the basement. The classrooms are all similar in appearance and retain much of the original woodwork. Most of the original

3. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates 1900-1902 **Builder/Architect** John H. Waldron, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

A fine local example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, the West Ward School is historically significant as one of Gas City's remaining high style structures constructed during Grant County's gas boom of 1890-1910, which transformed the small community of Harrisburg into the boomtown of Gas City. The school has retained much of its original appearance, and continues to be a landmark of Gas City's "gas boom era," as well as its educational heritage.

The impressive school building was constructed from 1900 to 1902 when the gas boom was nearing its peak, and after the town of Harrisburg's name had been changed to Gas City. The original town of Harrisburg was founded in 1867 when Grant County's first railroad passed through the area. Until the late 1880's when natural gas was discovered, Harrisburg was a small town with its principal business being the Wise and Nelson Sawmill. During this early period, Harrisburg's population reached as high as 750, and then dropped considerably just prior to 1887, when natural gas was discovered.

With the abundant natural gas supply, the town quickly grew. Much of the progress involved the activities of the Gas City Land Company, which purchased more than 1,000 acres of land and leased out gas rights. Attracted by the abundant natural gas supply, eight manufacturers built factories the first year and the population increased considerably. By early 1892, when its name was changed to Gas City, the town had a population of approximately 1,560. In 1895, Gas City was incorporated, and it had a population of 3,600 by 1900.

During this period of economic growth and prosperity, the West Ward School was built, along with two churches, a major hotel, an opera house, various commercial structures, a number of additional factories, and a high school. Indicative of the prosperous times, the West Ward School is a large, two and one-half story brick structure which replaced a three-room brick schoolhouse at the same location. This impressive structure was designed in the Romanesque Revival style and has a number of distinctive characteristics. The large, arched entry, corner towers, hip roof with intersecting gables, and rock-faced stone detailing, make this structure a fine example of its style.

The building was constructed by John H. Waldron, who built several residential and commercial structures in Gas City, as well as the two and one-half story brick high school, which was constructed in 1894 and is now known as the East Elementary School. Waldron was the first city treasurer of Gas City and served several terms as a city councilman.

The West Ward School building was originally used as an elementary school containing grades one through eight. In 1948 the Gas City, Jonesboro, and Mill Township Schools were consolidated, and the building then housed classes for kindergarten through sixth grade. In 1967, two one-story additions were added to the structure to house such facilities as a library, kitchen, visual aids center, furnace, etc. Presently, the building is used for overflow classrooms for the Mississinewa Community Schools.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately two acres

Quadrangle name Gas City

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	1	7	2	0	0	4	4	8	2	7	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please see continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roy Bigger, President, Gas City Plan Commission

organization Gas City Plan Commission date 7-18-84

street & number 319 E. South A Street telephone 317/674-5258

city or town Gas City state Indiana 46933

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *John T. Caslett*

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 11-7-85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet West Ward School Item number 7, 9, 10 Page 1

slate blackboards are still in place and have been overlaid with green tinted chalkboards. Acoustical tile has been applied to ceiling areas and fluorescent lights have been installed. Originally, the school had a coal-fired furnace which has been replaced by a gas furnace.

Item 9, Major Bibliographical References

- Brant & Fuller, History of Grant County, Volumes 1 and 2. New York, 1886.
Gas City Journal, "50th Anniversary Jubilee and Homecoming. Gas City, Indiana, 1942.
Grant County Junior Historical Society, A Century of Development. Marion, Indiana, 1937.
Indianapolis Star Magazine, June 22, 1985; January 7, 1979.
Marion Chronicle Tribune, files on Gas City and Harrisburg,
Whitson, Rolland Lewis. Grant County, Indiana, 1812 to 1912. The Lewis Publishing Company. New York, 1914.

Item 10, Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at the intersection of N. Grant and W. North A Streets, north to the intersection of N. Grant and W. North B Streets; east to the intersection of W. North B Street and Short Street; south to an east-west alley between W. North B Street and W. North A Street; west along that alley to a north-south alley between Short Street and N. Grant Street; south to W. North A Street; west to intersection of W. North A Street and N. Grant Street